Coup d'État

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Coup d'État

by flightless_pigeon

Summary

Ouma Kokichi has been found guilty.

He was fully intending on making himself the victim. Kokichi had stumbled down to his knees to force the antidote down Momota's throat. Before he could, though, the Ultimate Astronaut had hacked up so much blood that it became apparent that assuming he would survive the trial long enough to prove Monokuma wrong was too much of a risk.

So, he'd taken the antidote himself, and he'd killed Momota with his own two hands, and he'd hated it, hated it, *hated it*, swore he would never do such a thing to himself, to DICE, and suddenly he was here with the blood of three separate people on his hands and it was *horrifying*-

Okay, so maybe a lot of things hadn't gone in his favour from the very beginning of the game. It had been obvious for many days now that the mastermind is actively trying to get rid of him. But this? This sequence of events had turned out entirely illogical.

tldr: a chapter 5 culprit/victim switch

Notes

(This work was originally published on AO3 on 07/04/2025. This version may not be up-to-date and lacks the official A/Ns and tags, so when the AO3pocalypse is over, I will update it with the official version, as well as the original publishing date.)

Hello, this oneshot is pseudo-sponsored by Saint Motel - Dear Dictator.

This took me two years to write because I wanted to draw it as a comic but never developed my art skills enough to be satisfied with it. This is not the ideal format for an action-heavy setting, but I've done it better justice in written form than I ever could visually. Maybe in tens years' time lmao

See the end of the work for more notes

Ouma Kokichi has been found guilty.

"This is bullshit," Kokichi says, rather bitterly. "How boring to ruin the reveal so early, Monokuma. Everyone watching must be snoring by now."

"Shut *up*," Harukawa hisses with her fist wrapped around her knife, and he does. Monokuma won't let her take him out from here, but that doesn't mean she won't die trying. She already attempted that, after all.

"Are you going to explain yourself, Ouma-kun?" Kiibo asks with a stern expression. "Or is it just as Saihara-kun said?"

Kokichi doesn't answer him. He's furious, and he doesn't think that warrants an explanation.

The other students know by now that his goal was to render the game illegitimate by proving Monokuma's verdict wrong at the very end of the trial. The plan wasn't entirely in his control, but there certainly hadn't been enough mistakes on his end to reasonably justify the absolute farce it had turned into.

He was fully intending on making *himself* the victim. As soon as Harukawa had fled from the bathroom window of the hanger, Kokichi had stumbled down to his knees to force the antidote down Momota's throat. Before he could, though, the Ultimate Astronaut had hacked up so much blood that it became apparent that assuming he would survive the trial long enough to prove Monokuma wrong was too much of a risk. Kokichi was willing to take a gamble, but only an incredibly calculated one, and the odds of Momota kicking the bucket halfway through his master plan wasn't in their favour.

So, he'd taken the antidote himself, and he'd killed Momota with his own two hands, and he'd hated it, hated it, *hated it*, swore he would never do such a thing to himself, to DICE, and suddenly he was here with the blood of three separate people on his hands and it was *horrifying-*

Okay, so maybe a lot of things hadn't gone in his favour from the very beginning of the game. It had been obvious for many days now that the mastermind is actively trying to get rid of him. Perhaps his own fault, for daring to work with Iruma in front of whatever surveillance they had. But *this?* This sequence of events had turned out entirely illogical.

The other students had taken the bait of the press and video both being paused. Kokichi will pretend the obvious jump in footage was intentional, and not because he was so terrified of what he was about to do that his hands had shaken too much for him to time the clicking of both buttons correctly. Logically, it suggested a swap had been made. What would be the point, after all, of stopping the press just to start it again whilst Momota still remained under it?

Saihara's *ultimate* - and he uses that word lightly - detective work concluded that Kokichi could have let Momota die under the press after all. Of course, he'd also floated the possibility that Kokichi had died under the press after all, had entertained the original version

of the plan that was intended to happen. In fact, Saihara had not only dissected his plan with incredible accuracy, but had done so out loud, in front of Monokuma, and was even trying to work *with* him to get to the correct answer, despite already claiming that the whole point of the trial was to stop the game by not reaching the correct answer at all.

Of course, that's been Saihara's game this whole time. Kokichi will at least die knowing who the mastermind was, because it's become evident, particularly during this trial. And it makes sense, in retrospect. He'd never been able to figure Saihara out, and it always seemed like he was either extremely astute or outstandingly oblivious in regards to Kokichi's intentions, with no common pattern to his behaviour that he could discern.

The worst case scenario for the mastermind would be for the game to end, which would happen if everyone came to the wrong conclusion in the trials and died as a result, so they'd want the culprit to be uncovered every time in order to continue the game. Saihara even went to the extent of lying - on multiple occasions - just to achieve his desired outcome, and the rest of them always believed him without a second thought.

That, combined with his illogical conclusions today, is evidence enough that he is the mastermind. And in makes perfect sense, anyway. A detective was always going to be qualified to lead the trials over an Ultimate Leader. *Whatever*.

Even so, the outcome of the voting was absurd. Two votes for Harukawa, two for Momota, and two for himself. A three-way tie.

"Hey, why don't we go around and say who we voted for? I'll start - I voted for Momota-chan."

"Who cares about that?" Yumeno yells.

"I do! It's super duper important. How do you know tha-"

"Well, we don't care," Saihara says. "How could you do such a thing to Momota-kun?"

Kokichi laughs. *It's a lie, then*. Entirely rigged so that no matter what, their voting would have been considered correct.

That hadn't been enough on its own, though. As soon as the results had come through, the supposedly dead Monokubz - four in their Exisals and the red one trailing aimlessly behind them - had appeared and forced him out of the Exisal he had been piloting, just in time for Monokuma to cackle at him and spin the wheel. Kokichi could only laugh back in disbelief and despair, because this game had been rigged against him from the start. He never had a chance.

Maybe if he hadn't played his and Momota's parts so well, made it so confusing, the rest of them would have their doubts about who was at fault. Kokichi will begrudgingly admit Momota was a decent liar, particularly when it came to making shit up on the fly, but not as talented as himself. The quality of the performance in the Exisal might have given it away.

He'd tried to steer everyone away from the blind trust that stupid astronaut had been trying to push for the whole game, but their reliance on Saihara was unparalleled. Of course, Saihara had a strong hand in crafting it that way, making himself out to be some insecure weakling who needed the strength of others to come to the correct conclusion. Strength, of course, being a shoe-in for unwavering belief. Kokichi can pretend that it's because all the smart ones had died earlier on, that everyone that's left are sheep, but even he himself had been lured in, and in such a personal way that he refuses to give any further acknowledgement, because it is nothing short of mortifying.

There's no point trying to explain himself any further, because he doesn't want their takeaway to be that Saihara was, yet again, correct in his deductions. He could claim Momota died to the poison, but there's no evidence to prove it to the audience, so Monokuma won't accept that.

Instead, Kokichi just smiles and closes his eyes, waiting to be taken away. He won't give them the satisfaction of knowing just how upset and defeated he feels. His final lie will be one he takes out of Momota's book. Pretending he's strong and indestructible, and encouraging the rest of them with a smile that contradicts his own broken spirit.

"Well played, Saihara. Good luck to the rest of you. Even if you hate me, I'll be rooting for you!"

"Huh?"

Time for the punishment!

Initially, Kokichi thinks Harukawa has managed to get him in her grasp. His airflow is suddenly constricted, and he's yanked backwards by his neck. His eyes fly open in shock as he attempts to pry her hands off him, but his fingertips hit metal, and he realises it's just the clasp encasing him and dragging him up to his execution.

What, no big post-trial scream session and dramatic announcement for Punishment Time? How boring.

He guesses it wouldn't do them any good to have the audience dwell on the likelihood of the votes distributing equally, nor hear him accusing Saihara of being the mastermind. Would rip all the tension out of a great reveal later on, surely. They watch for the suffering of the participants, after all. The whole trial could have ended in minutes if Monokuma had just forced him out of the Exisal to begin with, but that's not entertaining enough for their target audience.

Midair, his chequered scarf comes loose and begins to fall. Kokichi tries to grab it with one hand and attempts to cover the harsh bruises around his neck with the other, but to no avail. Even now, moments away from death, his ego refuses to let the rest of them see his weakness, the evidence on his body that Harukawa had ever hurt him. It occurs to him that he's so very terrified of what's about to happen. This is why he wanted to be the one under the press. He doesn't want to give anyone the satisfaction of seeing how scared he is to die.

Because of that, he forgets about the damage already done to his right arm until he holds it out enough to feel a twinge sharp enough for it to jerk out of his control. He's being pulled back too fast, and it sends waves of agony down his spine and failing limb, and his scarf whips behind him, out of his range. He's pulled back in time to see it settle on the stage below, and the moment it touches the ground, the floor itself morphs to replicate its pattern, eight by eight squares. *A chessboard*, he notes wryly.

Kokichi is placed midway on one of the edges, opposing a black figure with a crown and a giant animated version of Monokuma. He almost falls over, the pain in his back getting worse and worse the longer he stands, but manages to stabilise himself. Fifteen white dummies take up the remaining spaces on the back two rows, and those in line with himself have indicators on their backs to illustrate their roles. *Good*. At least as the King, Kokichi won't have to move much. He's sick of being in pain. He's been strangled, concussed, punched, shot *and* poisoned. Frankly, he's had enough.

Opposite him, Monokuma's side mirrors his own with black dummies. By giving Kokichi white, they're giving him the advantage. Maybe it's to say something about Kokichi initiating this execution, or perhaps it's just to match his aesthetic. It benefits them to look good, because they have an audience to please, after all. A crown is placed on top of his head.

Chess is a sixteen-piece strategy board game, and one of his favourites, despite it not being too flashy. In the back of his mind, Kokichi knows that this is an execution. Somewhere along the line, just like the trial, it will become rigged against his favour, and he will lose. By his own logic, he shouldn't perform anymore. Being entertaining is no longer preserving his life. Yet it goes against his very programming to back down from a game without giving his very best effort to win. It is, ironically, a kindness to go this way, because it's all he wanted in the first place. To play a fun game.

Game on, boy detective.

Coup d'Etat

Ultimate Supreme Leader Ouma Kokichi's Execution: Executed

He sets up the Queen's Gambit. It's his preferred starting move, to aggressively position the Queen before anything else, because it means the opponent will be focused on it for the duration of the game. It lets him sneak his knights about easier.

As Kokichi points and directs his pieces into their positions from where he stands, Monokuma mimics him without effort. No pieces have been lost yet. It's impossible to achieve a perfect game in chess, but he always aims to try anyway, with no unnecessary sacrifices.

It stays that way for a while, until Monokuma knocks over one of his pawns, and it explodes on impact, leaving a disgusting pile of organs and bodily fluids in its place. Kokichi cringes. *Wasn't that a blank space?*

When he observes the board again, he notices another pawn about to be trumped in Monokuma's next move, with nothing he can do to stop it. His first thought is that the bear is

cheating yet again. His second is to observe either side of him.

His pieces are moving around slowly, all by themselves.

Kokichi blinks, then puts on a bright smile, sweeping his hand around in a grandiose gesture. It's fine. He can work with this, easy.

The game speeds up around him, and it feels more and more like his own pieces are throwing themselves at the opposition. Kokichi is trying his absolute hardest, and easily trumps all of Monokuma's pawns, throwing his Queen around so quickly it's becoming difficult to see with the naked eye, and occasionally sliding in a Rook and a Bishop to aid. He's winning, in fact. For a moment, the game actually feels exciting.

Then one of the knights in two moves' reach of him turns black.

At this point, Monokuma's turns occur instantaneously, like he's already been programmed to carry out the next best possible move. Kokichi already had barely any time to think about his turn, let alone wait for it, and now, he is not only losing pieces, but Monokuma is gaining them in his stead.

Without a second thought, he positions his second Knight to intercept the first, and just as quickly, Monokuma eliminates it. Kokichi's face burns as the knights explode into a mix of gore and charred remains, and he swallows shakily. *I'm sorry. You came for me first. I had no choice. It doesn't matter anyway, you're not real, we're not real, it doesn't matter if it hurts, it's just a game. It'll be over soon.*

The game is so fast now that Kokichi has been reduced to an animal fighting for its life. Fuelled by adrenaline, he ignores the searing pain enveloping his body and starts traversing the board himself, wildly swinging his arms around to combat every piece coming for for him. He's exposed from all directions, and everything's coming closer and closer until-

He's face to face with the opposing king. The mastermind. There's only a couple of squares in between them, and so he gestures for the Queen to take it down. If he's played his cards right, it should be in perfect position to solidify a checkmate, along with all of his other pieces.

Nothing happens.

When Kokichi turns around, he's faced with his four remaining pieces having turned black, with a sinister-looking Monokuma sitting behind them. He stares at them blankly. The Bishop begins sliding towards him, and he covers his neck instinctively.

But before it can reach him, Monokuma jumps back to the opposite end of the board and smacks his fist down onto it. Every piece, himself included, goes flying through the air. Kokichi feels the crown slip from his head and the straps of his uniform whipping his face and torso as he flails helplessly.

While upside-down, the reality of everything comes rushing towards him, and he desperately tries not to release the tears welling up in his eyes. He doesn't want to think about it, doesn't

want his conscience to catch up to the guilt and pain he's been running from all this time, but it's difficult to hold control when he's falling to his death.

It's not fair. He tried so, *so* hard. He hated every second of this game. He just wanted the killing to stop. Instead, they'd made him kill Iruma, and Gonta, and Momota - *hell*, he'd had to kill three whole people just to keep himself alive long enough to try and ruin the game. *Three!* What's wrong with the world? Why do they want this barbaric display from him? It might not be real, but it's so real to Kokichi, to everyone else being forced to participate along with him. And it *hurts*. It's been hurting all this time, and it will continue to. Always.

Distantly, he registers Monokuma grabbing the other King in one hand and the remaining pieces in the other just before his skull makes contact with the floor, splitting open with a sickening crack in unison with the rest of the bones in his body.

The shadow surrounding his figure gets larger and darker until the bottom of the chessboard is in sight, and Ouma Kokichi's life is ended with the crushing pressure of the game board slamming on top of him, blood, guts and viscera splattering out from under it.

From the trial room, the mastermind watches the King's crown rolling away, eventually coming to a still as it topples over upside down, and she smiles.

GAME OVER

End Notes

I learnt from this experience that I both do not like and am not good at descriptive writing lmao

I came up with this thinking it was a completely new concept and couldn't find anything remotely similar until my final sweep just before publishing. Mine's still unique, but I'd feel guilty if I didn't acknowledge it here.

Thanks for reading! Please leave kudos and/or a comment if you enjoyed :)

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